

YOR920000324US1
Amendment dated 01/17/2006

09/605,709
Reply to Office Action mailed 12/19/2005

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REMARKS

Claims 2, 5 and 6 are currently pending in the application, the Examiner having canceled independent claims 1, 3 and 4 in accordance with MPEP §1214.06. The Examiner's final rejection of claims 1, 3 and 4 was sustained on appeal. By this amendment, claims 2, 5 and 6 are amended to carry into effect the decision of the Board. The foregoing separate sheets marked as "Listing of Claims" shows all the claims in the application, with an indication of the current status of each .

The decision of the Board overruled the Examiner's rejection of dependent claims 2, 5 and 6. This amendment rewrites these claims in independent form for the Examiner's consideration.

The invention allows gaps between words making up an n-gram. An n-gram with such gaps is called by the applicant a "sparse n-gram", the term "sparse" being borrowed from the term "sparse data" as described in the paper "Contextual Word Similarity and Estimation from Sparse Data" cited in the specification (page 4, lines 1-5).

With regard to claim 2, the Board concluded that the passage from the Sarukkai reference cited by the Examiner did not teach "extracting sparse n-grams ...". However, the Board also concluded that "sparse n-gram" was not defined in the description at page 3, lines 15-27, although the Board stated that this passage "does explain how gaps are permitted between words making up an n-gram."

Consequently, the applicant understands the Board's decision to be a determination that while the meaning intended by the applicant is stated in the specification, the term "sparse n-gram" is not defined to convey the intended meaning. Therefore, in order to carry into effect this aspect of the Board's decision, the term "sparse n-gram" is replaced by its intended meaning, which is an n-gram permitting gaps between words making up the n-gram.

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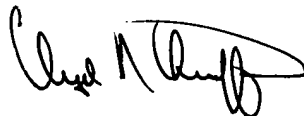
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It is respectfully submitted that this amendment conforms the claims in accordance with the recommendations of the Board. It is further submitted that this amendment places the application in condition for allowance.

Should the Examiner find the application to be other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at 703-787-9400 (fax: 703-787-7557; email: clyde@wcc-ip.com) to discuss any other changes deemed necessary in a telephonic or personal interview.

If an extension of time is required for this response to be considered as being timely filed, a conditional petition is hereby made for such extension of time. Please charge any deficiencies in fees and credit any overpayment of fees to Deposit Account 50-0510 (IBM-Yorktown).

Respectfully submitted,



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